

1-14. (CANCELED)

15. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A surgical warming blanket arranged for use during surgery on a patient and comprising at least two layers capable of forming a hollow air space between the two layers for receiving warmed air from a heating unit, the two layers and air space being arranged in operation to form a substantially tubular arrangement at least partially surrounding a patient receiving space, whereby when warm air is passed into the air space the warm air is delivered to the patient receiving space via the blanket, to maintain warm air within the patient receiving space, the patient receiving space being arranged to receive the patient's body and allowing access to the patient's body for surgery without disturbing the blanket, and

wherein one of the two layers of the blanket has a portion of its surface formed of porous material so that the warmed air is delivered to the patient receiving space by diffusing over the entire surface of the porous material at a relatively low velocity so as to have the effect of evenly warming the patient without forming relatively high velocity streams of air.

16. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The surgical warming blanket in accordance with claim 15, wherein the tubular arrangement surrounds the patient receiving space on three sides.

17. (CANCELED)

18. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The surgical warming blanket in accordance with claim 15, wherein the surface of the blanket is arranged to be fluid repellent, so that liquid contamination is repelled by the surface of the blanket.

19. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The surgical warming blanket in according to claim 15, wherein the surgical warming blanket is sized and shaped so that the patient receiving space is arranged to receive an animal, whereby to maintain warmth of the animal.

20. (CANCELED)

21. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The surgical warming blanket in accordance with claim 15, the surgical warming blanket is sized and shaped so that the patient receiving space can receive a human, whereby to maintain warmth of the human.

22. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A heating unit for a patient warming system,

the heating unit including a delivery port for delivering warmed air to a patient warming blanket, and a feedback means for determining whether a patient warming blanket is attached and responsive to a determination that the patient warming blanket is not attached, to disable delivery of warmed air via the port; and

wherein the patient warming blanket has a surface portion fabricated from a porous material so that warmed air delivered to the patient warming blanket is diffused through the entire surface portion of porous material at a relatively low velocity so as to have the effect of evenly warming the patient without forming relatively high velocity streams of air.

23. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The heating unit in accordance with claim 22, wherein the feedback means includes a pressure sensor for sensing back pressure on the air delivery port.

24. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The heating unit in accordance with claim 22, the heating unit being arranged to heat the air to a range of temperatures.

25. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The heating unit in accordance with claim 24, being arranged to heat air up to 46°C.

26. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The heating unit in accordance with claim 22, wherein in combination with the surgical warming blanket arranged for use during surgery on a patient, the blanket having at least two layers capable of forming a hollow air space between the two layers for receiving warmed air from the heating unit, the two layers and air space being arranged in operation to form a substantially tubular arrangement at least partially surrounding a patient receiving space, whereby when the warm air is passed into the air space the warm air is delivered to the patient receiving space via the blanket, to maintain warm air within the patient receiving space, the patient receiving space receiving the patient's body and allowing access to the patient's body for surgery without disturbing the blanket.

27. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method of warming a patient during surgery, comprising the steps of receiving the patient within a patient receiving space within which the patient's body is accessible for surgery, passing warmed air into a patient receiving space to keep the patient warm, the step of passing warmed air being carried out by utilizing a surgical warming blanket arranged for use during surgery on [[a]] the

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patient, the warming blanket comprising at least two layers capable of forming a hollow air space between them for receiving warmed air from a heating unit, the two layers and the air space being arranged in operation to form a substantially tubular arrangement at least partially surrounding [[a]] the patient receiving space, whereby when warm air is passed into the air space the warm air is delivered to the patient receiving space via the warming blanket, to maintain warm air within the patient receiving space, the patient receiving space receiving the patients body and allowing access to the patients body for surgery without disturbing the warming blanket to form the patient receiving space and deliver the warmed air thereto; [[and]]

forming one of the two layers of the warming blanket of porous material so that the warmed air is diffused to the patient receiving space across an entire surface of the porous material at a relatively low velocity so as to have the effect of evenly warming the patient without forming relatively high velocity streams of air which causes the small animal to be cooled due removing more heat from the small animal then is being supplied to the small animal by the relatively high velocity streams of air;

using a small animal, having a relatively large surface area to volume ratio which renders the small animal susceptible to hypothermia, as the patient, and

heating the small animal during the surgery and maintaining a body temperature of the small animal, with the patient heating system, at a safe temperature with the warm air being supplied at a temperature about 46°C.

28. (CANCELED)

29. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A surgical warming blanket in accordance with claim 15, a continuation of one of the layers providing a blanket base within the patient receiving space, arranged for the patient to lie on.

30. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A surgical warming blanket in accordance with claim 19, wherein the animal is a small animal.

31. (CANCELED)

32. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method in accordance with claim 27, wherein ~~the patient is an animal and wherein~~ the surgical warming blanket is sized and shaped so that the patient receiving space is arranged to receive the animal, whereby to maintain warmth of the animal.

33. (CANCELED)

34. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A method in accordance with claim 27, wherein the surgical warming blanket is arranged to be fluid repellent, so that liquid contamination is repelled by the surface of the blanket.

35. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A method in accordance with claim 27, wherein one of the two layers of the surgical warming blanket has a continuation which provides a blanket base on which the patient lies.

36. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A method in accordance with claim 27, wherein the tubular arrangement of the surgical warming blanket surrounds the patient receiving space on three sides.

37. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A patient heating system comprising:
a surgical warming blanket arranged for use during surgery on a patient and comprising:

at least two layers forming a hollow airspace therebetween for receiving warmed air from a heating unit, the two layers and the air space forming a substantially tubular arrangement at least partially surrounding a patient receiving space, whereby when the warm air is passed into the air space the warm air is delivered to the patient receiving space via the blanket, to maintain warm air within the patient receiving space;

the patient receiving space receiving the patient's body and allowing access to the patient's body for surgery without disturbing the blanket, a first layer of the two layers of the blanket is formed of porous material having a substantially uniform porosity such that a point of the first layer has substantially the same porosity as all other points over an entirety of the first layer so that the warmed air is delivered to the patient receiving space by diffusing evenly over the entirety of the first layer at a relatively low velocity so as to have an effect of evenly warming the patient without forming relatively high velocity streams of air, and

a heating unit comprising a delivery port for delivering warmed air to the patient warming blanket and a feedback means for determining whether the patient warming blanket is attached, and, responsive to a determination that the patient warming blanket is not attached, to disable delivery of warm air via the port.

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38. (NEW) A method in accordance with claim 27, further comprising the step of dimensioning the warming blanket to be 560 mm in width, 1110mm in length.